9:Foxbrooke G-5 (1936-1948) 1948 FL12 Masai FL12
Kisonko

number of women available; at times a poor relation will join in a gate with a richer one; again, mothers and mothers-in-law and deceased brothers' wives are frequently included; and nowadays married warriors are found staying on with their fathers. Thus a symmetrically arranged 'gate' is seldom found in practice.

The practical effect of this system is that a Masai elder attempts to main a constant succession of wives, marrying new ones to replace those who depart with their sons. As there are no unmarried adult women amongst the Masai, this means that senile old men take to wife girls only just past the age of puberty. As such girls have previously been accustomed to the companionship, both sexual and social, of the moran, it is little to be wondered at that they frequently run away, or attempt to run away, with their erstwhile companions. The elders have no idea of preventing this by making the girls' married life more attractive than their previous one; their only remedy is force.

The two primary motives for polygamy are the desire for children, and the necessity to have women to tend the cattle. There is little sexual jealousy amongst the Masai; within the age-set the wives are communal to all age-mates, and an age-mate known to be the father of one's child is regarded as a special friend. Intercourse between men of one age and the wives of another is nominally prohibited, but its extensive practice is acknowledged by the Masai, and in fact receives general connivance. Concerning the economic motive for polygamy, increasing herds necessitate more women to tend them, and at the same time offer the means of obtaining such women. Not that the actual dowry is heavy — usually three heifers and a bullock — but a man prefers to marry off his daughters to a rich elder, rather than to a poor moran. Thus economics and sociology are closely linked, and action in one sphere will have repercussions in the other.

The extent to which polygyny is practised can be judged from the following table :—

Distribution of Wives amongst Adult Male Population.

	Kibaya		*Senetoto*		*Engare-nai*		*Longido*		*Total*	
	men	wives	men	wives	men	wives	men	wives	men	wives
Total unmarried	102	—	135	—	53	—	151	—	441	—
One wife	65	65	82	82	50	50	134	134	331	331
Two wives	46	92	46	92	15	30	46	92	153	306
Three wives	13	39	12	36	11	33	10	30	46	138
Four wives	8	32	6	24	5	20	1	4	20	80
Five wives	1	5	2	10	1	5	—	—	4	20
Over five wives	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	25	4	25
Total polygamists	66	—	68	—	22	—	61	—	217	—
Total of men and women	233	233	263	344	133	138	348	385	999	896

/83 cont./

words and blows by the assembled warriors, because they did not rear their son to have the hardening and self-control necessary for a warrior, while the weakling is reviled for a long time afterwards as olkiyo = coward, or olkidal = the bad one. After the circumcision all the men of the neighborhood gather in the kraal, where they are regaled with meat and honey beer by the fathers of the ones just circumcised, after the latter have kindled a fire with juniper twigs (Juniperus procera). The festival is called ol ogiir l ol aijok ameiita, that is, the festival of the circumcised boys. Unbelievable amounts (1)

1. I once observed that my four Masai boys together at an evening meal ate over 80 pounds of lean meat.

of raw or half-cooked meat slightly roasted at the open fire are consumed in the shortest time by the married men and women, whereas the warriors neither eat meat nor drink honey beer, but only take some fresh milk. People joke and laugh and everyone seems to want to outshout the others. The warriors boast of alleged heroic deeds in former wars and discuss the prospects of the ones circumcised that day on their first military expedition, which will perhaps take them to this or that region, where they themselves had made an attack only a short time before. The fathers dream of their sons' future heroic deeds and are happy at the thought of the rich booty with which the budding warriors will augment the paternal herds. Suddenly the glances of a few who had just been joking darken and turn toward a distant hut at whose door a solitary old man is sitting. They jump up and go toward him with quick steps. The angry expression on their faces matches their rough and abruptly uttered invectives and threats, in which one hears the reproaches that the old man has brought up his son to be a weak coward, who during the circumcision betrayed his pain by a twitching of facial muscles and a half-suppressed groan, which they, however, jeeringly compare to the roar of pain of a bull being cut. The old man has quickly fled from their imprecations into his hut, and his attackers vent their wrath on two gourd bottles of honey beer left standing, which they knock over and

881 /83 cont./
[626] trample underfoot. The one now scorned had also wanted /84/ to
[152] regale guests with it on that day, but no one came to him whose son showed himself to be a ɨlɔ́ŋɔ́ɔ́. While the old people, as long as
[535] there is something to eat and drink, are only interested in that, the
[538] warriors, already early in the afternoon, start to dance and sing with the young girls and amuse themselves in this way into the night. Not until about ten o'clock do they go back to their kraal, to which the girls presently follow them, after they have begged for a little more milk, which they take along to their lovers. /Ill. 18 appears here./

[758] The circumcised boys, soon after the completed operation, went into the huts of their mothers and stayed there for seven days, until a superficial healing of the wound has taken place. In order to hasten this, they are particularly well cared for and are given only milk, blood, and meat. During the following period, until complete
[411] healing, they roam in small bands with bow and arrow -- they do not
[223] use the ordinary bows, but ones only about half as long, made only for this occasion; the arrows used with them have a wax ball at the tip -- through steppe /85/ and forest, in order to shoot small birds, the skins of which they string by the beaks on a cord, which they place garland-like around forehead and occiput. Between the bird
[301] skins the en sibolio (sing. on sibolí) -- as the newly circumcised ones
[302] are called during their recuperation -- stick an ostrich feather on each side of their heads and paint their faces with white clay (en
[262] dongu). On the first day they go out, they slaughter a white goat-buck on the steppe. After they have roasted and eaten its meat, they throw the gnawed bones into the fire. This meal is called ol gíne l ol lenak (ol gíne = the goat buck, ol lenak means the tree with whose branches they make the fire). Every evening after their excursions they return to the kraal and to the huts of their mothers.

881 591 As soon as the young girl, who until then has lived in the warrior kraal in the most unrestrained freedom, concludes from certain

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 86]

561 /77 cont./
701 Mixed, light colors are the symbol of fickleness, frivolity, flighty,
702 childlike, and childish sentiments: they are not proper for adult men
• 152 with a serious conception of life. The festival lasts about a month
865 as a rule. During it the youths practice handling the weapons, tell
[822] each other gruesome war stories, which they have heard from warriors or invented themselves, and thus stimulate their imaginations, just as the reading of Indian and pirate stories does this on occasion among
[807c] European boys. They artificially make themselves positively wild, to which also the taking, still strange to them, of various roots and barks with a nerve-stimulating effect (which will be discussed later), which they add to the cooking meat, contributes a great deal. All their yearning is directed toward war and murder, everything in them is pressing toward killing an enemy, and enemies for them are all non-Masai. Each of them would like soon to be no longer an ebor alem =
[721] white, that is to say, not yet dyed with blood, sword. Not infrequently they turn against defenseless caravans if such happen to be in the vicinity. Whether or not spoils are to be taken in this is of no importance, only killing and murdering, they do not think any further. Many attacks on caravans have come about in this way. Such opportunities, however, are always rarities for individual troop of youths.
561 The rule is a war expedition against a sedentary tribe. After the
701 fighting, the ol barnot again return to the paternal kraal to live there
702 a few more years. During this time they attach themselves more and
[721] more closely to the warriors, in order to learn from them and to improve themselves in the art of war. They accompany the warriors on their raids and now and then also take part in their forest meals. Nevertheless they do not gain admittance into the warrior kraal, which is just as wounding to their self-confidence as the circumstance that they are looked down upon by the warriors and treated almost like boys. The wish to be on an equal footing with the warriors grows ever keener in them. But they still lack two things for that: the name for their age class and the shield escutcheon.

561 In order to request the bestowal of the former from the ol oibori,
[791] a gathering (olŋ olgoana) (1)

1. Any gathering for a consultation is called this.

/121 cont./

181 If we summarize the traits outlined above, there results, on the one hand, the fact that the character of the Masai in general reveals the same virtues and vices as that of other primitive peoples, but then also that the Masai are definitely to be counted among the better half of these peoples.

181 609 The following little story, which a man from the Kilimandscharo area of Moschi once told me, shows how the Negroes illustrate the character of the Masai. "It was many years ago when we still fortified the area well with ditches and thorn hedges and the few approaches were both made hidden and well guarded. One day a couple of our people went into the steppe to see whether an elephant had fallen into the trap pit made there. There in the bush they found an old, sick Masai near starvation. Full of compassion, they took him home with them, where he gradually recovered. The convalescent seemed filled with gratitude and swore eternal friendship toward his benefactors when he departed to seek out his kraal again. A few days after his departure the war cry of our people suddenly resounded one night throughout the area. The Masai had come to make war on us, led by that old man who during his stay here had become familiar with the road and bypaths and who owed his life to us."

201 • 152 Astonishment, depending on its degree, is expressed by a more or less wide opening of the eyes and the mouth, as well as by a simultaneous raising of the eyebrows.

[147] A feeling of shame is manifested by a darkening of the skin of the face and often also the throat, corresponding to the "blushing" of the white race. In order to express indignation one looks at the other with wide-open, staring eyes often cast slantwise. One observes the same in the case of obstinate children.

In reflection the forehead is wrinkled longitudinally and often also transversely in its middle section.

To express ill-humor, depression, anger because of loss, etc., one scratches the head bent to one side -- usually to the left -- with the right hand and thereby wrinkles the forehead transversely above the root of the nose.

/121 cont./

201 In contentment the eyes sparkle, and there is a happy expression
• 152 on the face.

The stubborn one often presses his lips together tightly. In lying,
201 especially in stiff-necked lying, the one concerned usually exhibits a
152 well-played /122/ candor and the absence of any trace of conscious-
507 ness of guilt, which often increases to the point of indignation, as
181 though over an unjust suspicion. The Masai shows here a great talent for acting, which he probably has in common with most of the dark-skinned African races. Even when he sees himself convicted and has gained the impression that the judge or master is convinced of his guilt, he does not stop lying, but often persists for a long time in the behavior just described. More rarely his look gradually becomes uncertain, the eyes blink, the skin darkens somewhat, the voice becomes husky and somewhat hoarse and his facial expression says approximately: "Now nothing more will help!"

[147]

201 As a sign of contempt one spits before the one held in contempt.
152 More rarely among men, but commonly among women, the same feeling is expressed by pushing out the lips and lower jaw and simultaneously extending the head forward.

The feeling of disgust is manifested by spitting.

[147] An extreme degree of fear is shown by a blanching of the skin, especially of the face, trembling of the hands, trembling in the voice, blinking of the eyes, which move unsteadily toward the sides, whereby the head either stays still or is turned in the direction of the eyeballs.

[522] Laughter often increases to a pitch that brings tears to the eyes.

In order to indicate that one is not in a position to do or to prevent something, or to protect oneself or a friend from a loss, to convince someone of the truth of one's words, one shrugs one's shoulders, turns the elbows inward, spreads the hands out, and opens the palms while raising the eyebrows.

Petulant children make a face as though they intended to start to cry.

/122 cont./

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• 152 An expression of guilt, cunning, or jealousy can be recognized. If these feelings are very intense, the one conscious of guilt often holds one hand bent into a loose fist, in front of his mouth in such a way that the lower joint of the index finger lies crosswise below the root of the nose, whereas the jealous one appears surly and silent before he turns to violence. One who through cunning wishes to lure into a trap, to deceive, or to lie to another looks at him as little as possible; only now and then he gives him a more or less shy glance. The European will observe this especially often.

201 A low whistle is regarded as a sign to observe absolute silence; a blinking with the eyes admonishes the initiate to keep a secret. Warriors, for example, use the former during a night attack, brigands when a victim is approaching, thieves, etc., when there is danger in delay. One can often observe the latter in the case of one accused, when he is confronted with witnesses, and one also sees it not infrequently on other occasions when one /123/ questions a Masai and another one standing nearby wants the former to give false or no information.

Affirmation is expressed by a single, brief tossing back of the head and a simultaneous lowering of the eyelids. As a sign of negation the head is shaken laterally.

It has already been mentioned that one does not point at a person with the finger, but rather indicates the direction concerned with thrust-out tongue or lips or lower jaw. The index finger is [789] precisely the finger under the nail of which one may apply the magic medicine. This thought is also the basis of the threat with the index finger -- which is done as among us. -- The threat is therefore merely an ostentative display or holding of the finger, which can bring danger to the one threatened. One points to animals and inanimate objects, with the right arm extended, with the hand, while index finger and the middle finger are outstretched, whereby the tip of the latter rests on the nail of the former.

/123 cont./

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152 A threatening with blows, just like the energy of a blow is indicated with a smacking sound that the index finger snapping down on closed thumb and middle finger of the right hand produces, a movement that is executed from the wrist and to a lesser extent also from the elbow and is sometimes observed among us as an involuntary reaction after taking hold of an unpleasantly hot object, or also among snuffers after taking a pinch. Besides this gesture one also finds another, the snapping of the middle finger from the tip of the thumb on the ball of it, common among us. Often this expresses a higher degree of threat, a threatening with weapons. On the other hand, however, one also finds it as an expression of embarrassment, whereby at the same time the shoulders are drawn up.

If the Masai wishes to emphasize emphatically that something is altogether at an end or gone, that nothing is left of it any more, he runs his thumbnail directly behind the edge of his upper incisors and pushes it quickly forward with a snapping sound.

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861 I observed repeatedly how mothers reprimanded their naughty children, in that they accompany their eno el aigwachobe eh abiak, that is, go, or things will go badly with you! with a motion of the hands, which consisted of her rapidly passing the palms of her hands, turned toward each other, half clapping, half grazing, and, to be sure, the right hand, chiefly active in this, would be snapped forward from behind.

151 /124/ The strength of vision of the Masai, like that of other primitive peoples, is very good. Often they already saw objects in the landscape at distances at which a normal-sighted European could not yet discern anything. The author was particularly struck by the fact that the people were able to recognize an object seen at great distances better than the European, even such whose eyes, through many years' residence in the country, were accustomed to the peculiar forms of vegetation and lighting effects in the steppe. When the latter was in doubt as to whether it was a matter of, for example, a man or a tree stump, or of a termite hill or a large antelope, the Masai's power of recognition always proceeds to be the better one.

(cont.) That they have at their disposal a reliable judgment of distance is

/186 cont./

276 171 [179] have adopted many of their manners and customs the warriors regard becoming stricken with the em boschona as a sign of true, ferocious warriordom, and they frequently simulate it for this reason. Amidst whooping cries the simulator with spear in hand dashes out of the camp and would surely not inflict an injury on anyone, even if -- as in the /187/ cases observed among the Wadschagga -- a few people did not immediately run after him, seize him, and lead him back.

276 [152] The lack of any control over emotions and inclinations probably also plays a not unimportant role in the occurrence of em boschona. Its cause seems to me, however, to lie entirely in the excessive use of the aforementioned excitants, so that the illness would not occur at all if they were avoided completely or were taken only in a very considerably lesser volume. Their harmfulness can be observed almost daily among the warriors in an abnormal state of nervous irritability. This view is based on my observations (with which all the statements on this point made to me by the Masai agree) that only the warriors, that is, the young, strong, healthy men, are stricken with em boschona, while boys and youths, before they enter into the association of the warriors, and even during the first period as such, and furthermore married men, as well as girls and women, remain completely immune to it. These persons, however, either do not take any of the stimulants named at all, or only in very small measure.

276 158 191 In this description of em boschona one is inevitably reminded of the running amok of the Malays. Only the complex of symptoms is similar, however, while the etiology and the prognosis are entirely different. Whereas running amok as a rule ends with the death of the person concerned, em boschona is cured within a few days. Whereas the effect of opium as the original cause of running amok is today no longer regarded as decisive, in every case of em boschona the copious use of these agents only a short time before will be indicated.

*** ticks, tsetse fly, ad disease.

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152 Burning grassland appears to be a deeply ingrained cultural trait. Young herdboys will seek out and ignite small patches of unburned grass, sometimes only one or two feet across. We have watched Masai moran striding across a dry plain lighting matches as they went, leaving a long line of small blazes gradually joining together behind them. We have watched junior and senior elders lighting fires, as well as boys and moran. We had marked plots that were burned as much as four times in one year. So we would add to the above explicit reasons for burning, the implied reason that they also burn simply because they get some satisfaction out of it.

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[171] Fires are lit with matches. Possibly some are started from cooking fires that get away. Some fires, especially in wooded areas, are started by Wanderobo honey hunters (see here). But virtually all the fires whose origins we investigated were lit by Masai.

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182 It seems probable that the coming of Europeans has altered the fire regime by providing large supplies of matches. It is far easier to light fires with matches than by using flint or other primitive means. With fires